

DEPT. OF JUSTICE  
CIVIL RIGHTS  
DIVISION

NOTICE

MATERIAL MUST NOT BE REMOVED FROM  
NOR ADDED TO THIS ENCLOSURE FILE

By order of the Attorney General

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07-01-2019 FOIA # 61755  
DOCID: 34347309

167-33-451  
FEDERAL RECORDS CENTER

# ROUTING AND TRANSMITT SLIP

TO (Name, office symbol or location)		INITIALS	ACTION
Littlefield			CIRCULATE
		DATE	COORDINATION
			FILE
		DATE	INFORMATION
			NOTE AND RETURN
		DATE	PER CON - VERSATION
			SEE ME
		DATE	SIGNATURE

## REMARKS

Gail, each of the attached 8 complaints were filed by the same victim. Although each of these should be investigated under separate D.I. numbers, it may well be that we can bring one ~~closed~~ <sup>completing</sup> action. In any event we should have a <sup>completing</sup> preliminary in each separately.

Do NOT use this form as a RECORD of approvals, concurrences, disapprovals, clearances, and similar actions

FROM (Name, office symbol or location)	DATE
ACB	7/19/76
	PHONE

OPTIONAL FORM 41

AUGUST 1967

GSA FPMR (41CFR) 100-11.206

048-10-81694-1

552-103

GPO

5041-101

FBI, BUREAU

167-33-451

Justice

7-6-76 New

FBI, Dir.,

Memo. to Civ.Rts.

Civ. Rts. Mtr. Public Accommodations, inv.,  
ERNEST MAY, d/b/a EDGEWATER LOUNGE, Morgan  
City, La. Cornell A. Keeler-victim

Civ. Rts.

8-3-76

8-3-76

37/ec

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

# Memorandum

RECEIVED 5

JUL 6 5 57 PM '76

DEPT. OF JUSTICE  
MAIL ROOM  
ORDM

9/26/76 - 8 700

TO : Assistant Attorney General  
CIVIL RIGHTS DIVISION  
FROM : Director, FBI

SUBJECT: ERNEST MAY: DOING BUSINESS AS (EDGEWATER LOUNGE)  
HIGHWAY 90 EAST, MORGAN CITY, LOUISIANA  
CORNELL A. KEELER-VICTIM  
PUBLIC ACCOMMODATIONS-CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964

Reference is made to \_\_\_\_\_ memorandum dated \_\_\_\_\_  
(your file \_\_\_\_\_).

There is enclosed one copy of the ~~XXXX Special Agent~~ LETTERHEAD MEMORANDUM  
dated 7/1/76 at NEW ORLEANS.

A. ☐ This covers the preliminary investigation and no further action concerning  
a full investigation will be taken by this Bureau unless the Department so directs.

B. ☐ The investigation is continuing and you will be furnished copies of  
reports as they are received.

C. ☐ The investigation requested by you has now been completed. Unless  
advised to the contrary no further inquiries will be made by this Bureau.

D. ☐ Pursuant to instructions issued by the Department, no investigation will  
be conducted in this matter unless specifically directed by the Department.

E. ☐ Please advise whether you desire any further investigation.

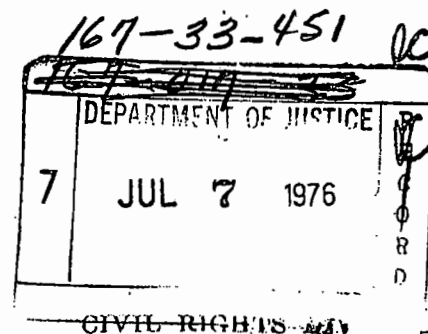
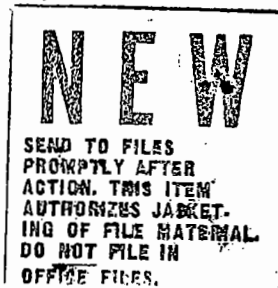
F. ☐ This is submitted for your information and you will be advised of further  
developments.

G. ☐ This is submitted for your information and no further investigation will  
be conducted unless specifically requested by the Department.

H. ☒ This covers the receipt of a complaint and no further action will be  
taken by this Bureau unless the Department so directs.

Enc. (1)

*Change  
8/3/76  
JS.*





UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

New Orleans, Louisiana

June 30, 1976

In Reply, Please Refer to  
File No.

ERNEST MAY;  
DOING BUSINESS AS  
EDGEWATER LOUNGE  
HIGHWAY 90 EAST  
MORGAN CITY, LOUISIANA  
CORNELL A. KEELER - VICTIM  
PUBLIC ACCOMMODATIONS -  
CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964

---

Mr. Cornell A. Keeler, 321 Garber Street, Morgan City, Louisiana, was contacted on June 25, 1976, at his residence. He advised that he is the President of the local chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in Morgan City. The FD-302 reflecting Keeler's interview is attached hereto:

THIS DOCUMENT CONTAINS NEITHER RECOMMENDATIONS NOR CONCLUSIONS OF THE FBI. IT IS THE PROPERTY OF THE FBI AND IS LOANED TO YOUR AGENCY; IT AND ITS CONTENTS ARE NOT TO BE DISTRIBUTED OUTSIDE YOUR AGENCY.



## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

6/30/76

Date of transcription

Mr. Cornell A. Keeler, 321 Garber Street, was contacted at his residence. He was advised of the identity of the interviewing agent. He then furnished the following signed statement:

"6/25/76

"Morgan City, La.

"173-

"I, Cornel A. Keeler, having been advised of the identity of SA Douglas R. Knight, do hereby furnish the following signed statement.

"I am 29 years of age, residing at 321 Garber Street, Morgan City, Louisiana. I graduated from Nichols State University in 1970.

"Approximately two months ago, I decided to see which of the lounges in Morgan City do not serve blacks. I went into about 13 lounges and was refused service in two of the lounges, and served on a "to go" basis only, in four others.

"The lounges I was refused service in were the River Palace, located on Railroad Avenue in Morgan City, and the Cables Lounge, located on U.S. Highway 90, just outside the city limits of Morgan City.

"In the River Palace, I went in and sat at the bar. I asked the barmaid for a drink, and she told me 'I'm not going to serve you, get out of here.' A white male who said his father owned the place, came up and told me, 'It would be best to get out of here, before I get hurt.' I told him that 'If they wanted me to leave to call the police. If the police wanted me to leave I would leave.' They called, the police came, and I went outside. They told me to be careful. They were very polite, and only wanted to caution me. I told them I would be careful and would not cause any trouble.

Interviewed on 6/25/76 at Morgan City, Louisiana File # NO 173-1942  
by SA DOUGLAS R. KNIGHT/dnc Date dictated 6/29/76

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NO 173-  
DRK/dnc

"I walked in the Gables Lounge and a barmaid shook her head and said 'I'm sorry, I can't serve you.'

"When I walked into Andy's Lounge, I walked up to the bar. A white bartender told me, 'I couldn't stay in there anymore, they could only serve me on a 'to go' basis. I purchased a half pint of vodka, and left.

"At T-John's Lounge, the waitress told me, she would serve me, but I would have to take it to go. I ordered a glass of orange juice and left.

"When I went into the Naughty Night, I walked up to the bar. I ordered a draught beer. She, the barmaid, told me she could serve me to go, but I couldn't stay there. I took the beer, and started to drink it at the bar. She asked me to leave me again. I told her I wanted to see the manager, and she told me he wasn't in. I was encouraged by a couple of customers, so I finished my drink and left.

"At Lester's Lounge, I walked in and stood by the pool tables and watched a couple of games. I then asked the waitress for a beer. She told me I couldn't drink it in there. I asked her why I had to leave. She said the owner did not want them to serve colored people. I asked her who was the owner and she told me Lester Giordana (Phonetic). At that time, the police came in and they asked me to come outside. The police told me they were asked to ask me to leave. I went outside with them, and told them what I was doing. They told me don't go back into Lester's that night. They said they would have to arrest me if they got a second complaint on the same night.

"Approximately six months ago, I went into the Edgewater Lounge. The barmaid told me they could only serve me 'to go'. I didn't order anything and just left.

NO 173-  
DRK/dnc

"Someone else told me that they were not allowed to be served in the liquor store side of the Fifth Quarter Lounge, located on U.S. Highway 90 in Morgan City.

"I have furnished the above signed statement, consisting of this and two other pages, because it is true and correct.

"/s/ Cornel A. Keeler

"Witness: SA Douglas R. Knight, FBI, Laf., La."

KEELER stated that he does not remember who told him about the Fifth Quarter Lounge, however, he does remember that the person was a Negro male, who lives in New Orleans, Louisiana.

KEELER advised that he is the President of the local chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, in Morgan City. He stated that he purposely went to the bars, because he had been told that they would not serve black customers.

The following description was obtained of KEELER during the course of the interview:

Race                      Negro

Sex                        Male

Height                    6'

Weight                    200

Date of birth

FOIA(b) (6)



NO 173-  
DRK/dnc

Social Security  
Account Number

FOIA(b) (6)

Place of birth

Morgan City

Employer

Shell Oil Company

Education

Graduate , 1970  
Nicholls State University  
Thibodeaux, Louisiana.

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

## Memorandum

TO : Assistant Attorney General

FROM : Director, FBI

DATE: 7/6/76

SUBJECT: ERNEST MAY: DOING BUSINESS AS (EDGEWATER LOUNGE)  
HIGHWAY 90 EAST, MORGAN CITY, LOUISIANA  
CORNELL A. KEELER-VICTIM  
PUBLIC ACCOMMODATIONS-CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964

Reference is made to \_\_\_\_\_ memorandum dated \_\_\_\_\_  
 (your file \_\_\_\_\_).

There is enclosed one copy of the ~~REPORT OF SPECIAL AGENT~~ LETTERHEAD MEMORANDUM  
 dated 7/1/76 at NEW ORLEANS

A. ☐ This covers the preliminary investigation and no further action concerning a full investigation will be taken by this Bureau unless the Department so directs.

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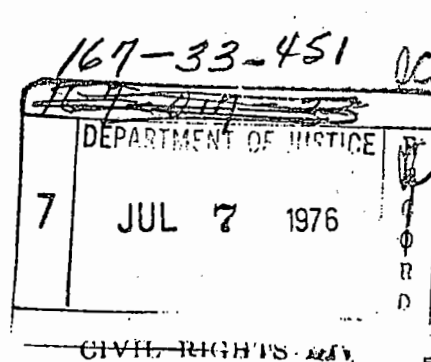
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F. ☐ This is submitted for your information and you will be advised of further developments.

G. ☐ This is submitted for your information and no further investigation will be conducted unless specifically requested by the Department.

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Enc. (1)





UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

New Orleans, Louisiana

June 30, 1976

ERNEST MAY;  
DOING BUSINESS AS  
EDGEWATER LOUNGE  
HIGHWAY 90 EAST  
MORGAN CITY, LOUISIANA  
CORNELL A. KEELER - VICTIM  
PUBLIC ACCOMMODATIONS -  
CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964

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Mr. Cornell A. Keeler, 321 Garber Street, Morgan City, Louisiana, was contacted on June 25, 1976, at his residence. He advised that he is the President of the local chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in Morgan City. The FD-302 reflecting Keeler's interview is attached hereto:

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ON RECEIPT  
1976

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

6/30/76

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Interviewed on 6/28/76 at Morgan City, Louisiana File # NO 173-1942

SA DOUGLAS R. KNIGHT/dnc

Date dictated 6/29/76

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NO 173-  
DRK/dnc

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"/s/ Cornel A. Keeler

"Witness: SA Douglas R. Knight, FBI, Laf., La."

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The following description was obtained of KEELER during the course of the interview:

Race	Negro
Sex	Male
Height	6'
Weight	200
Date of birth	

FOIA(b) (6)

NO 173-  
DRK/dnc

Social Security  
Account Number

FOIA(b) (6)

Place of birth

Morgan City

Employer

Shell Oil Company

Education

Graduate , 1970  
Nicholls State University  
Thibodeaux, Louisiana.

T. 7/21/76

Director  
Federal Bureau of Investigation

JUL 23 1976

J. Stanley Pottinger  
Assistant Attorney General  
Civil Rights Division

JSP:JHQ:LCB:PCL:bpm

DJ 167-33-NEW 451

Ernest May, d/b/a Edgewater Lounge,  
Highway 90 East, Morgan City, Louisiana;  
Cornell A. Keeler - Victim;  
Public Accommodations  
CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964 - Title II

9/13/76  
7/27/76  
ACB  
7/23/76  
JH  
7/23/76  
Please refer to your previous letterhead memorandum dated July 1, 1976, at New Orleans, in which Cornell A. Keeler made allegations of racial discrimination against the subject establishment. His allegations, if true, could constitute violations of Title II of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. Accordingly, please conduct the standard Title II investigation as outlined in the Assistant Attorney General's memorandum to the Director of August 11, 1971.

cc: Records  
Chrono  
Queen  
Berry  
Investigation File  
Hold  
USA, Shreveport, La.



NOTICE TO CLOSE FILE

Date:

11/15/76

File Number:

167-33-451

Case Title: Ernest May; d/b/a  
(Edgewater Lounge), Morgan City, La.

YOU ARE ADVISED THAT THE ABOVE FILE HAS BEEN CLOSED AS OF THIS DATE.

Remarks/Special Information:

We are suing this place under its current name and owner,  
Joseph Skinner, d/b/a Joe's Lounge. (DO# 167-33-457)

To:

Files Unit

Division

SIGNATURE: Patricia Gail Littlefield

DIVISION: Civil Rights Division  
PA & F Section

DOJ

Formerly LAA-25

FORM OBD-25 12-31-74